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ABSTRACT

Students' use of French in unsupervised classroom situations and outside the classroom was investigated in immersion center schools (all students are involved in French immersion programs) and dual track schools (French immersion programs co-exist with regular English language programs). A total of 414 students in grades 3 and 4 were observed during periods of structured but unsupervised activity in French immersion programs. Language usage was measured by teacher observation, students' self-reports, and teachers' reports. Language use was not significantly influenced by grade level or type of immersion program as assessed by teacher observation. The only statistically significant differences were between individual classes. This may indicate the extent to which the teacher and the setting had an immediate and forceful impact on the student's French speaking behavior. Students' self-reports tended to support findings from structured observations. However, teacher's reports indicated that students from immersion center schools spoke more French outside of the classroom compared to students from the partial (dual track) immersion programs. It is concluded that although results are mixed, in the teachers' minds there is little question that the immersion center is the more advantagous environment. However, all results indicate that students enrolled in immersion programs do speak French, at least to some extent, both within and beyond the classroom. (RW)

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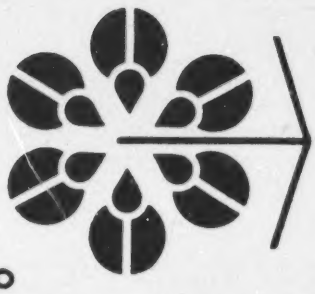

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BUT DO THEY SPEAK FRENCH?

A Comparison of French Immersion Programs in Immersion Only and English/Immersion Settings

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BUT DO THEY SPEAK FRENCH?

A Comparison of French Immersion Programs in Immersion Only and English/Immersion Settings

French Immersion education in the Ottawa Carleton area is presently being provided in two basic types of environments, the "immersion centre", in which all of the students attending the school are involved in the French immersion programs, and the "immersion schools" sometimes (and hereinafter) referred to as dual track schools, in which the French immersion program co-exists with the regular English language programs. It has been argued that immersion centres are a more effective environment for teaching French as a second language for a number of reasons. Chief among these reasons has been the idea of "Ambiance". If all of the students in a given setting are involved in French immersion, there will be less need for them to speak English either in or out of the classroom. The exclusive use of French by the teaching staff and those directly involved with the students would encourage the students in their use of French by example. Intra-school communications, posters, signs, decorations, and activities could all be in French and all could be used not only for teaching, but for the development of esprit, elan, and a general appreciation of French language and culture. By way of contrast, the dual track school must have a complete English orientation. It may simultaneously have a complete French orientation, but even under the best of conditions this will suffer in the competition with the students' mother tongue. Having heard an announcement or read a sign in English, it is a very rare anglophone who will continue attending long enough to get the information a second time in French. An additional feature of the dual track school is the presence of large numbers of pupils who cannot understand French. If they play with each other as children are wont to do, the language of play will have to be English.

Furthermore, there may well be a tendency for the children in the English program to discriminate against, name call, and generally make fun of those in the immersion program. To the extent that this type of discrimination takes place, there is a devaluation of both substance and form of the immersion program. These factors taken together make the immersion centres the more effective setting for the teaching of French as a second language. So, at least, the arguments go.

The question of the relative efficacy of these two types of program has not been thoroughly examined. Andrew, Lapkin and Swain (1978) present some data bearing on the issue. Their research is of particular interest in that it is based on schools within the Ottawa and Carleton school systems. These authors, while initially comparing the performance of immersion and non-immersion students, found that there were also differences within the immersion programs which seem to favor immersion centres over dual track schools. They found that grade five immersion centre students outperformed other grade five immersion students on three different tests of French achievement, on English vocabulary and reading comprehension, and on tests of math, science and a variety of work-study skills. These findings are impressive, but it must be remembered that they were obtained from a somewhat limited sample of grade 5 classes. "While it is not clear that the superior performance of the immersion centre students in these academic areas is due to the language environment of the immersion centres, it is clear that a French language environment in these schools has no detrimental effects in the achievement of the immersion students in any of the academic areas tested." (Andrew, Lapkin, and Swain, 1978, p.27).

Prior to the 1978-79 school year there were no immersion centres under the jurisdiction of the Ottawa Board of Education. Due at least in part to pressure from parents, one school was reorganized to function as an immersion centre serving grades K-4. The advent of this program provided

an ideal research opportunity, and the Research Centre of the Ottawa Board of Education was asked by the French Language Teaching Consultants to undertake a study comparing the relative efficacy of the two types of programs. Unfortunately there was apparently no base data on which comparisons of student progress could be gauged. For this reason it would not be possible to answer the question "Did the year in the immersion centre enhance students' French achievement more than a year in a dual track school?" In fact, the lack of base rate data of some sort eliminated the possibility of any comparisons as rigorous as achievement test scores. This circumstance, combined with the limited period of time available for the study led the Research Centre to look at the schools not as learning factories which produce X amount of achievement, but rather as settings designed to promote and foster the development of French language usage. Our concern became the students' use of French in unsupervised situations and outside of the classroom, teachers' perceptions of and satisfaction with program and setting, and to a limited extent, the retention of students in the immersion programs.

Responding to this concern, the research was designed to provide information relevant to five questions:

1. Are immersion centre students more likely to use French in unsupervised situations than their peers from immersion programs in dual track schools?

2. Are immersion centre students more likely than their peers from immersion programs in dual track schools to indicate that they use French outside of class time?

3. Are immersion centre teachers more likely than their peers teaching immersion programs in dual track schools to report satisfaction with their work setting and their students' progress.

4. Are there other differences in teachers' perceptions of the programs which differ between immersion centres and dual track schools?

5. Will the month by month pattern of student transfers out of the new immersion centre differ substantially from the transfer patterns of previous years when the immersion program shared that school facility with the core program?

In approaching these questions we felt that we could gain the information we desired by observing students during periods of structured but unsupervised activity, by asking students and teachers direct questions about what we wanted to know, and by obtaining school records regarding student transfers within and out of the Ottawa Board system.

Our approaches to these questions were based on a number of assumptions which should be made explicit at this point. In regard to the students' actual use of French in relatively unsupervised situations, we assumed:

1. That the students being observed had sufficient ability to communicate with each other in French, although they might occasionally be forced into English by vocabulary limitations.
2. That the percentage of time the students speak French is a changeable phenomenon varying to some extent with the milieu in which the child studies, works, plays, etc.
3. That teachers would attempt to cooperate with our purposes (if informed) and not deliberately bias the behavior of their students either through unwarranted intrusion during the experiment or by special instructions given prior to the experiment. It is of some interest that one teacher, though apparently interested and willing for her class to take part in the study, violated the instructions by repeatedly telling her students during the activity that they must not speak English. The data from this class was not included in the analysis.
4. That the presence of a tape recorder would not unduly bias the children's behavior in an otherwise open situation.

In surveying the teachers from both types of programs we assumed that teachers would respond as fully and honestly as they were able, and that a substantial number of teachers would respond to a questionnaire about their work.

In our questionnaire for the students, our assumptions were that:

1. Students would be able to read and understand simple questions in French and
2. That students at the third and fourth grade levels would be able to respond meaningfully to a scale requiring a discrimination among "Always", "Usually", "Seldom" and "Never".

There were undoubtedly other assumptions made during this project, but the above are the most readily notable. It was our belief that meaningful research could be done in this area even with such an array of untested assumptions.

Research Methods - Language Use Study

Subjects

The Language Use Study involved a total of 414 students enrolled in sixteen classes. Initially seventeen classes were involved, but data from one class was dropped when it was learned that the teacher had given her class particularly biasing instructions. The remaining classes were evenly divided between third and fourth grade and between immersion centre and dual track schools. The sample is described in Table 1. All third and

Table 1

Description of Sample for Student Language Use Study

Program	Grade	No. of Schools	No. of Classes	No. of Groups	No. of Students
Dual Track	3	4	4	22	103
	4	4	4	22	95
Immersion Centre	3	2	4	26	111
	4	2	4	24	105

fourth grade immersion classes within the Ottawa Board took part in the study, as well as four classes from the Carleton Board. No split classes (e.g. 2-3 or 3-4) were involved. Immersion centre classes were drawn from two schools, while the dual track classes were drawn from six schools.

Procedure

Each of the participating classes was supplied with a complete set of materials and instructions for a small group cooperation task called "Secret Boxes". The Instructions supplied for this activity may be found in Appendix "A". Enough materials were supplied so that the class could be divided into groups of four to five students each. Prior to the actual in-class involvement, members of the research centre staff met with each of the teachers involved to answer any questions they might have about the study and to ensure that they understood their role in the task. "Secret Boxes" is a structured activity for groups of four to five children which requires them to work and talk together independent of the teachers supervision. It takes thirty to forty minutes on each of two occasions. Classes were divided into small groups, and the interactions within each group during the activity were tape recorded for later coding and analysis. At the end of the second session of this activity, the students were all asked to complete a four item questionnaire about their use of French outside of the classroom. A copy of this questionnaire appears in Appendix "A".

Results - Language Use Study

Ten minute segments of tape from session one and session two were coded by a single bilingual coder. These segments were taken after a few minutes of tape elapsed to allow the children to become involved in the task and get used to the tape recording. The coding consisted of indicating the language being spoken at a given time on the recording.

Codings were made at approximately 2 second intervals. This method of coding is similar to that used by Flanders (1970) and Tuong (1976). The codings were converted to a score corresponding to the per cent of time French was being spoken during the activity. When the coding of all the tapes was completed a sample of 10% was randomly selected for recoding in order to check on the reliability of the coder. The scores for the original coding and the recoding of the sample of tapes were correlated to give the remarkably high reliability of r =.99. Split-half reliability for all groups was obtained for session one (r =.86) and the scores for session one and session two were also correlated as a measure of the stability of the students language behaviors (r =.71). These rather high reliability coefficients indicate that for the sample selected the language used by the students is relatively stable within the setting tested.

The per cent time in French scores were examined in an analysis of variance design as in Table 2. Only differences between class (teacher) were found to reach statistical significance. Grade level and program did not reach levels even approaching statistical significance.

Table 2

ANOVA Design and F-tests for Student Language Use Study

	Immersion Centre				Program				Dual Track							
Grade	3				4				3				4			
Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Mean % Fr.Score	84	93	50	99	85	99	100	99	64	97	87	98	72	96	97	92

F program = .005 N.S. F Grade = .458 N.S.

F class = 4.761, p <.01

Of perhaps more interest than these general findings are two anomalies that occurred in the data. In one of the immersion centres, three of the classes scored between 98% and 99% time in French, while the fourth class scored only 48%. In reviewing information about the classes it was found that a substitute teacher had been in that classroom on the days that the data were collected. The second anomaly is from a dual track school. The average per cent time in French for this class during session one was only a very low 44.5%, but in the second session the average jumped to 89.8%. It was found that this class had missed library day in their English class in order to take part in the study, and for logistical reasons it became necessary to do session 1 in the room normally used for the English class. For the second session, this class remained in its usual classroom. There were no other noticeably large changes in scores.

Student Questionnaire

The questionnaire given to the students at the end of session two asked them to rate the frequency of their use of French outside of class but in school, out of school with friends, and at home with family. In addition they were asked if they sometimes watched French TV. The distribution of these responses were examined using a chi square statistic. These data are summarized in Tables 3 to 6.

Table 3

Distribution of Responses (Expressed as %) to:
"How much of the time do you speak French at recess or lunch with your friends?"

	Program		
	Dual Track	New Immersion	Older Immersion
Always	0.0	0.0	2.7
Usually	4.0	1.0	22.3
Sometimes	44.4	36.5	57.1
Never	51.5	62.5	17.9

$\chi^2 = 87.1$, $df = 6$, $p < .001$

Table 4

Distribution of Responses (expressed as %) to:
"When you are with your friends outside of school how much of the time do you speak French?"

	Program		
	Dual Track	New Immersion	Older Immersion
Always	3.0	0.0	9.8
Usually	7.1	9.6	8.9
Sometimes	52.5	46.2	32.1
Never	37.4	44.2	49.1

$\chi^2 = 23.37$, df = 6, $p < .001$

Table 5

Distribution of Responses (expressed as %) to:
"When you are at home with your family how much of the time do you speak in French?"

	Program		
	Dual Track	New Immersion	Older Immersion
Always	3.6	2.9	0.9
Usually	13.2	16.3	8.0
Sometimes	64.5	67.3	68.8
Never	18.8	13.5	22.3

$\chi^2 = 7.54$, df = 6, Not significant

As can be seen from these tables, a distinction was made between the two immersion centres involved in the study. It was decided prior to analysing the data that this distinction would be appropriate since one of the immersion centres was in its first year while the other was in its fifth year of operation.

From Table 3 one can see that by their own reporting, more of the students at the older immersion centre speak French more of the time than students at the newer immersion centre or those in the dual track schools. This difference (chi square = 87.1, df = 6) is significant beyond the p = .001 level. This applies to their speaking in school during the times they are not in the classroom.

Similar results may be seen in Table 4. Again, students from the older immersion centre report that they speak more French more of the time outside of the school setting than their peers from the other schools involved in the study. These data yielded a chi square (χ^2=23.37, df = 6) which is significant beyond the p = .001 level.

Table 5 shows the distribution of responses to the question "How much of the time do you speak French at home with your family?" There is apparently little difference among schools or programs in the students reporting on the extent of their use of French at home (Chi square χ^2= 7.54, df = 6, not significant).

Table 6

Distribution of Responses (expressed as %) to:
"I watch French TV Programs ..."

	Program		
	Dual Track	New Immersion	Older Immersion
Sometimes	92.3	88.0	89.2
Never	7.7	12.0	10.8

χ^2 = 1.63, df = 2, not significant

Lastly, from the student questionnaire, the response indicating whether the students watch French TV sometimes or never. Over 90 per cent of the entire group of immersion centre students indicated that they sometimes watch French TV. Differences between the two immersion centres and the dual stream schools were not of statistical significance.

Research Methods - Teacher Survey

All of the 86 French Immersion teachers working in the eight schools involved in the Language Use Study were asked to complete a questionnaire concerning their ideas and perceptions of the programs in which they teach. The questionnaire used was adapted from a previously used teacher interview (Morrison, et al, 1977) and may be found in Appendix A. Frequency distributions were obtained for all items, and the data were cross tabulated using "Dual Track Schools", "New Immersion Centre" and "Older Immersion Centre" as the independent variables. The analysis was run a second time using "Dual Track Schools" and "Immersion Centres" as the independent variables. These results were obtained using the SPSS program package (Nie et al., 1975).

Results - Teacher Survey

Forty-six questionnaires or 53.5% of those sent were returned. The per cent of questionnaires returned from any given school ranged from a low of 22.2% to a high of 80.0%. Of the teachers whose classes were involved in the Language Use Study, 88.2% returned their questionnaire.

On the question relating to the teacher's satisfaction with her or his work situation, 94% indicated that they were in the satisfied to very satisfied range. (These responses all lie above the midpoint on a seven point scale of satisfaction.) Ninety-six per cent (96%) of the teachers said that they were satisfied to very satisfied with their students' progress in other subjects. There were no significant differences between schools or programs in relation to these questions of satisfaction.

In spite of this generally expressed satisfaction with work setting and student progress, 86.6% of the responding teachers indicated that an immersion centre would be more advantageous than a dual stream school for teaching French. The 5 teachers who indicated that the program advantages were equal or favored the dual stream schools all came from two schools in the dual stream sample. No one teaching in an immersion centre indicated that a dual stream school would be the more advantageous setting. Statistically this difference between the teachers' perceptions is significant between programs beyond the $p = .05$ level. These data are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7

Distribution of Responses (Expressed as %) to:
"In your opinion which would be more advantageous?"

Group	Response: Immersion Centre	Dual Track School	Either
Dual Track Teacher	82	14	4
Immersion Centre Teacher	100	0.0	0.0

$\chi^2 = 7.42$, $df = 2$, $p < .05$

Teachers indicating that immersion centres would be the more advantageous school setting, most frequently cited the ambiance, the possibility of having all activities in French and the reduced pressure to speak English as reasons for this advantage.

Question 6 inquired about the teacher's linguistic goals for the year. Responses to this question fell into five readily codeable categories plus an "other" category. Frequency of responses is given in Table 8.

The per cents total to more than 100% because many teachers gave multiple goals for the year. The "other" category is both large and diverse. Teachers mentioned goals ranging from the development of basic grammar to instilling love of French language to making an exchange trip to Quebec. Of the major categories, far and away the most frequent area where teachers were hoping to see improvement was that of Oral Expression.

Table 8

Linguistic Goals of Immersion Program Teachers

Area of Improvement	% Indicating*
Oral Expression	83
Understanding	24
Writing	24
Vocabulary	17
Reading	14
Other	40

* Total is greater than 100% because some teachers gave multiple responses.

Question 7 asked teachers about how they apportioned their time among four basic linguistic skills, reading, speaking, writing and listening. As an indication of the relative weight put on these skill areas, Table 9 shows the per cent of time teachers spend in each of these four areas. It can be seen from this table that teachers report spending relatively the most time on reading skills followed by speaking skills.

Table 9

Teacher Estimates of Time Spent on Various Linguistic Skills

Skill	% Time Spent
Reading	29
Speaking	26
Listening	24
Writing	20

These relative allotments of time did not differ significantly between programs. A separate question, Number 8 asked about the per cent of time devoted to teaching vocabulary as opposed to teaching subject matter in subjects other than French. Across programs, teachers indicated that they spend approximately one third time on vocabulary and two thirds time on subject matter. As can be seen from Table 10, there was fairly close agreement between the dual track schools and the new immersion centre. At the older immersion centre, however, no teacher reported spending more than 12% of his or her teaching time on vocabulary. These scores when treated in a chi square show a significant difference beyond the $p = .01$ level ($\chi^2 = 9.50$, $df = 2$). However it should be noted that the response rate to this item was rather low for the older immersion centre with only half of the teachers who returned the questionnaire responding.

In response to question 14, approximately two thirds of the teachers from dual track schools and three quarters of those from the immersion centres indicated that the students had the opportunity to speak with francophones. Generally these contacts came through friends of the families, trips in Quebec and occasional school field trips. Differences between programs was not significant.

Table 10

Per Cent of Teaching Time Spent on Vocabulary in Subjects Other Than French

Program	% Time on Vocabulary
Dual Track	32.9
New Immersion	37.6
Old Immersion	11.3

Table 11

Distribution of Responses (Expressed as %) to:
"What language do the immersion students use ..."

		English	French	Both	χ^2 +	
At Recess	Dual Track	96	0	4	5.42	*
	Immersion Centre	73	13	13		
At Lunch	Dual Track	96	0	4	12.09	**
	Immersion Centre	53	27	20		
During Organized Phy.	Dual Track	33	48	19	3.34	n.s.
	Immersion Centre	14	43	43		
With Teacher	Dual Track	0	89	11	2.94	n.s.
	Immersion Centre	7	71	21		
At school Activities	Dual Track	72	16	12	8.80	**
	Immersion Centre	23	31	46		

* $p \leq .1$

** $p \leq .01$

\+ $df = 2$

Question 18 in its several parts asked teachers for their impressions of the student's use of French in a variety of situations within the school. Table 11 summarizes these data. Teachers in the immersion centres are much more likely to indicate that their students speak at least some French during recess, lunch and at school-wide activities than their peers teaching in the dual track schools.

When speaking with the teacher and during periods of organized play, the reported behavior of the students in the two types of program are much more similar. In both of these situations, the children are much more likely to speak in French than they are during free time such as recess and lunch period, and the differences between scores are no longer statistically significant.

The biggest difference in the teachers perception of their students language behavior is in regard to school-wide events. Here the results reinforce our intuitions. In the immersion centres where all of the children have some facility in French, they are far more likely to speak French in school-wide gatherings than their peers who are surrounded by unilingual anglophones. These data were reanalyzed separating the old and the new immersion centres. The significance levels were increased slightly by this procedure, but the overall pattern remained unchanged.

Teachers were asked whether or not they thought their students were confident in their ability to speak French, and if no, why not. Table 12 shows the per cent of teachers responding from each of the immersion centres and from the dual track schools. Somewhat surprisingly, the teachers from the newer immersion centre mostly indicated that their students would not be confident in their ability to speak French. These data treated using

Table 12

Distribution of Responses (Expressed as %) To:
"Are the students confident in their ability to speak French?"

	Yes	No
Dual Track	84	16
New Immersion	43	57
Old Immersion	100	0

$\chi^2 = 7.37$
$df = 2$
$p < .05$

Table 13

Responses (in per cent) to:
What are the teaching qualities needed in a successful immersion program?"

"Quality"	% giving this response *
Concentration on Oral expression	39
Interesting Program and Materials	32
Excellence in and love of French	29
Patience, devotion and hard work	27
Imagination, creativity and flexibility	24
Class aims and organization	20
Exclusive use of French maintenance of ambiance	20
Excellence and dynamism in teaching	20
Attentive, caring and encouraging atmosphere	17
Other	44

* Total is greater than 100% because many teachers gave multiple responses.

a chi square showed a statistically significant difference beyond the $p = .05$ level. The most frequently cited reasons for this lack of confidence were lack of practice and limited vocabulary.

Question 11 asked "In your opinion, what are the teaching qualities needed in a successful immersion program". The teachers gave a wide variety of responses to this item, and although most responses could be fit into one of nine categories, there was still a large number of responses which were classifiable only as "other".

Table 13 shows the distribution of responses to this item. It is of some importance that the most frequently mentioned "quality" had to do with concentration on oral expression, followed by the need for interesting program and teaching materials. It is only after these pressing concerns that teachers mentioned the sorts of things we generally think of as teaching qualities.

Finally, teachers were asked what changes they would like to see in the French immersion programs. Once again there was a wide diversity of responses. The responses were coded into eight groups plus an "other" category. These responses are presented in Table 14.

Table 14

Desirable Changes in the Immersion Program

Change	% of teachers suggesting*
More and better choice of materials	29
Special texts for immersion classes	11
Establish a uniform program and curriculum between schools	26
Greater early emphasis on oral communication	14
More activities in French	11
More use of immersion centres	11
Extend program to other grades	6
No changes	6
Other	46

* Total is greater than 100% because many teachers gave multiple responses

The most frequently mentioned response again highlights the teachers' concern for quality teaching materials. The responses also indicated the teachers' concern about what they see as a lack of uniformity among the different immersion programs in the Ottawa Carleton area. Beyond these two fairly common concerns, there was little agreement about how the immersion programs should be changed.

Research Method - Student Transfer

Information regarding the transfer of students out of the French immersion program at the new immersion centre and from the same school for the years prior to its becoming an immersion centre was gathered by examining the teacher's class registers for previous years, and from the school central records for the present year. Our interest in looking at these records was only to see those children who transferred out of the French immersion program for reasons other than a family move. Although this school has a turnover rate, sometimes as high as 35%, as much as 90% of the turnover is due to families moving in and out of that part of the city. Table 15 shows the number of students transferring out of the French immersion program without a family move during the last three school years. It should be noted that this table does not include transfers made during the summer when school is not in session.

Table 15

Midyear transfers out of French Immersion Program to Local English Programs *

School Year	Sept-Nov	Dec-Feb	March-May
76-77	5	4	2
77-78	3	2	3
78-79	3	2	1

* Transfers made for reasons other than a family move.

Results - Student Transfer Study

As can be seen, from Table 15, there has been a steady decline in the number of mid-year transfers out of the French immersion centre during the three year period in question. These numbers are small enough that they should not be treated as inferential statistics, but simple inspection gives the impression that there has been an improvement in the schools retention of students during the school year. It should be noted, however, that this improvement began before the school became an immersion centre.

Discussion

In the original discussions and planning of this project it was expected that differences might be found between the dual track schools, the new immersion centre and the older immersion centre in the amount of French spoken by the students during periods of relatively unsupervised activity. Based on the conventional wisdom that the ambiance of the immersion centre would have a positive effect on the amount of French spoken by the students, it would have been predicted that the children at the older immersion centre would speak in French more of the time than those at the newer immersion centre, and that these children in turn would use more French than the student at the dual track schools. It might also have been predicted that children at the fourth grade level would speak French a greater proportion of the time than those in the third grade. Analysing the data, however, showed no main effect for program and no main effect for grade level. The only statistically significant differences to appear were between the individual classes. One might easily fall into the presumption that this represents a difference between teachers, teaching styles, etc. However, at the present time there is no body of data to justify this presumption. The anomalies which occurred in this data are in many ways more interesting than the general

results. They indicate in some measure the extent to which the teacher and the setting may have an immediate and forceful impact on the student's French speaking behavior. At the older immersion centre where three classes averaged 99% time in French, the fourth class's groups averaged only some 48% time in French. The most obvious difference between the low scoring class and the high scoring classes is that the low class had a substitute teacher in the classroom during both of the testing sessions. Again looking at one of the dual track classes, which had a very low average group score of 44.5% time in French for the first session and the much higher average group score of 89.8% for the second session, we can get an idea of the critical effect the setting has on the student's use of French. During the first session, the children were annoyed and grumbling about the loss of their library time, and were put into the classroom where they normally speak in English. The second session did not interfere with any desirable activity, and was held in the regular classroom. Again, there may have been other differences contributing to the differential between the first and second session scores, but they are not known to the researchers.

A possibility worth considering is that the data obtained using the "Secret Boxes" activity does not properly serve as a measure of the students freely produced language behaviors. The activity was after all introduced by the teachers, and they did remain in the classroom, although for the most part they seem to have maintained only a minimal involvement during the activity. It can certainly be argued that the teacher's presence has a major constraining effect on the students' use of English, as demonstrated by the low score when the person present was a substitute.

Perhaps a better indication of the effectiveness of the two environments as settings designed to promote French language usage may be had from the reports of the students and teachers. First, as indicated in

Table 5 there is no significant difference between groups in the amount of French they report speaking at home. The small difference that can be seen from the raw data show that slightly fewer students from the older immersion centre report using French at home. Yet it is this same group of students from the older immersion centre who report using the most French in the school outside of class time. Surprisingly, the group which reported the least use of French on this question was the students from the newer immersion centre. (Table 3). Similar results were obtained when the children were asked about their use of French outside of the school setting. More children from the older immersion centre use French more of the time than those from the other school settings.

The teacher's view of things is slightly different, and falls more nearly in line with the expectations of conventional wisdom. More teachers from both immersion centres report their students as using at least some French outside of classtime than those teaching in the dual track schools. (Table 11). Ultimately, what can be said is that the results from three different views of student language use are mixed, possibl showing some advantage in the immersion centres.

Although these results are mixed, in the teachers' minds there is little question that the immersion centre is the more advantageous setting, and they might be right. It would be most sensible to re-examine the students use of French through a variety of techniques in another two years or so, after the newer immersion centre has been in operation long enough to develop a stabilized French milieu.

Finally, in answer to the question "But do they speak French?", we can say with some confidence that the children enrolled in immersion programs do indeed speak French at least to some extent both within and beyond the classroom.

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APPENDIX "A"

Instructions and questionnaires distributed during study.

(In English Translation)

SECRET BOXES, a two part cooperative activity for small groups.

Purpose: To involve students in an activity which will require cooperation, sharing of materials and an interchange of ideas.

Participants: The class should be divided into groups of four or five students in a way that results in the largest possible number of groups.

Materials: Each group will require one medium size box, an assortment of construction paper, magazine pictures, crayons, paste and string. These basic materials will be supplied by the Research Centre. Scissors and additional art materials if available may be supplied at the classroom.

Session 1.

Time: Allow thirty to forty minutes for session one of this activity, including instructions and distribution of materials.

Objectives: Each group is to place up to six objects or pictures of objects into their box which they then seal. (Since the objects will remain in the boxes for the period between session 1 and session 2, teachers may wish to place some restrictions on the objects available for this activity.) Next, the boxes will be decorated using the available art materials. The decorations on the box should give clues about what the students have put inside. These clues can be cut out or student drawn pictures, or they can be word clues. As a group, the students should choose what to put into the box and together they should decide how to decorate it.

Instructions; 1 Tape recorders should be set up and located according to where the groups will be working, so that there is one machine for recording each group. This will be done by the Research Centre staff in consultation with teachers at a time when the children are not in the classroom. This procedure is intended to minimize the infringement on class time.

2 At the start of the activity, the children should be formed into the groups and instructed about where to work. At this point, the materials should be distributed and the objectives of part one explained. The children may be told that they are being recorded so that people of the Research Centre can find out about how they talk to each other. They should not be told to remember to speak in French.

3 The teacher should now start the several tape recorders or designate a student in each group to do so.

4 Once the instructions for part one have been given and the tape recorders started, the teacher should withdraw and allow the students to work on their own unless some sort of discipline problem occurs.

5 After approximately ½ hour, this portion of the activity should be concluded. The tape recorders should be turned off, and the children returned to regular class work or to a discussion of the activity as indicated in the following section on integration.

Session 2.

Time: Allow thirty minutes for session two of this activity.

Objectives: The boxes should be redistributed to the groups in such a way that no group has the box that it decorated. Based on the clues given on the outside of the box, each group will then try to guess the actual contents of the box they have been given. Since the boxes can only have six items at most, each group will be limited to six guesses. Group members should attempt to reach some agreement on the six guesses by talking about the clues.

Instructions 1 The classroom should again be prepared for the activity by RC staff when the children are not in the room.

2 As nearly as possible, the children should be divided into the same groups as were used for part one.

3 The objectives of part two should be explained to the groups, and the tape recorders started. At this point the teacher should again withdraw, allowing the children to work on their own.

4 After 10 to 15 minutes, the activity should be stopped. One at a time, each group now tells the class its guesses about the contents of their box, and opens the box to see how they have done. When all the groups have had their turns, the recorders should be turned off.

5 At this point the teacher may wish to use the integration questions which follow or return the class to more usual activities.

Integration: To enhance the integration of this activity into a setting such as a classroom, a variety of questions similar to the following may be beneficial.

1) Was it easy to think up clues to put on the box?

2) Do you think picture clues or word clues will be harder to figure out?

3) Is there anyone in your group who did not take part?

4) Would you like it better if someone had a hard time or an easy time guessing what is in your box?

5) Would you like it if no one could guess what was in your box?

6) How many correct guesses did your group make?

7) Did you decide against any guesses that turned out to be correct?

8) Did picture clues or word clues help more?

Language Usage Questionnaire

1) When I am with my friends at recess or lunch time I Always / Mostly / Sometimes / Never speak French.

2) When I am with my friends outside of school I Always / Mostly / Sometimes / Never speak French.

3) When I am at home with my family I Always / Mostly / Sometimes / Never speak French.

4) I Sometimes / Never watch television programs.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INTERVIEW WITH IMMERSION TEACHERS

1. Do you have combined classes (e.g. levels 2-3 or 3-4)

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, at what levels? _____

How many pupils in each level? _____ _____

2. Do you group the pupils according to their ability?

Yes _____ No _____

If your pupils are grouped:-

No. of groups _____

Are the same pupils always in the same group?

Yes _____ No _____

Do they change groups for different subjects?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, in what subjects?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. How wide is the range of abilities in your classroom?

_____

_____

Were your pupils chosen because of their intelligence and ability?

Yes _____ No _____

Do below-average students remain in immersion?

Yes _____ No _____

If not, why? _____

4. Are there monitors?

Yes _____ No _____

Are they useful?

Yes _____ No _____

What function do they serve?

_____

_____

_____

5. Is there a library in your school?

Yes _____ No _____

Are there French books?

Yes _____ No _____

How are they arranged?

French section: Yes _____ No _____

By subjects: Yes _____ No _____

Are you satisfied with the library arrangement?

Yes _____ No _____

If no, why not?

_____

_____

_____

6. What linguistic goals do you have for this year?

_____

_____

_____

7. About what percentage of time do you give to each "learning?"

listening _____ speaking _____ reading _____ writing _____

8. In other subjects, taught in French, what amount of time do you spend on:
vocabulary _____ subject matter _____

9. In your opinion, what are the teaching qualities needed in a successful immersion program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. In your opinion, what would be more advantageous:

An immersion school _____

Immersion classes in an English school _____

Why? _____

_____

_____

_____

11. In your opinion, do the pupils attain the aims of the programs?

Yes _____ No _____

Why? _____

_____

_____

_____

12. Do pupils in immersion communicate in any way with francophones?

Yes _____ No _____

Where and How? _____

_____

_____

_____

13. Do they take in French programs?

On television _____

On radio _____

Movies _____

Others _____

14. Do you know of any child in immersion who is or was incapable of learning French?

Yes _____ No _____

If Yes, in your opinion, what do you think the reasons are?

_____

_____

_____

15. Do you know of any pupils unable to learn through French?

Yes _____ No _____

Explain _____

_____

_____

_____

16. What language do the immersion students use:

At recess _____

At lunchtime _____

During organized play _____

When they talk to the teacher _____

During special events (for the whole school) _____

17. Are the students confident in their ability to speak French?

Yes _____ No _____

If not, why not? _____

_____

_____

_____

18. What changes would you like to see in the French immersion programs?

(a) In general, how satisfied are you with your working conditions as an Immersion teacher?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very dissatisfied						Very satisfied

(b) In general how satisfied are you with the progress of your students?

In French:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very dissatisfied						Very satisfied

In other subjects:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very dissatisfied						Very satisfied

In addition to completing the questionnaire, it would be most helpful to the Research Centre if you would provide the following information:

School _____

Grade(s) taught _____

Did your class participate in the Secret Boxes Activity?

Yes ____ No ____